

Remarks

This Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action dated **July 8, 2008**, wherein the Office rejected claims 38, 41, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Applicants respectfully request that the amendment be entered, which Applicants believe places the application in condition for allowance or better form for appeal.

Applicants have amended claims 38, 41, and 44. No new matter has been added.

Applicants note with appreciation the telephone conversation with the Examiner.

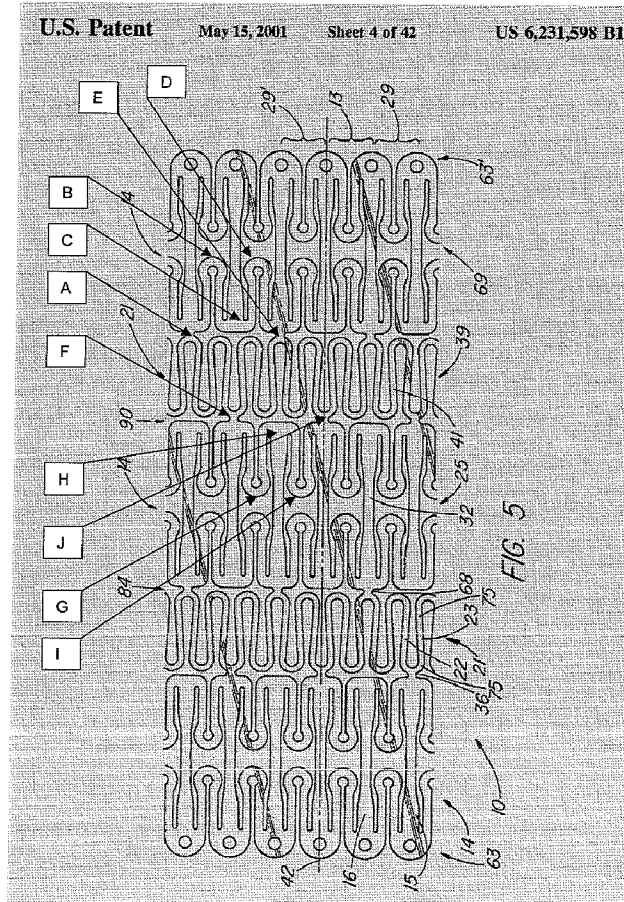
The following comments are presented in the same order and with headings corresponding to those set forth in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Office rejected claims 38, 41, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), alleging the same to be unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,231,598 to Berry et al. (hereafter “Berry”).

Regarding Claim 38

Berry fails to teach or suggest all the elements of claim 38. In order to further prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 38 to recite “the first loop containing band extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis,” “the second loop containing band extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis,” and “the third loop containing band...extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis.” Berry, as shown below in the *annotated* version of FIG. 5 presented by the Office in the Office Action, does not depict bands extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis:



As described in the Office Action, sections ABC, CDE, and EFA are considered “bands” by the Office. However, none of these structures extend 360 degrees about the longitudinal axis, as in claim 38. To that end, Berry does not anticipate claim 38. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Regarding Claim 41

Berry fails to teach or suggest all the elements of claim 41. In order to further prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 41 to recite “the first circumferential bands extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis,” and “the second circumferential bands extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis.” Berry, as shown above in the *annotated* version of FIG. 5 presented by the Office in the Office Action, does not depict bands extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis. To that end, Berry does not anticipate claim 41. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Regarding Claim 44

Berry fails to teach or suggest all the elements of claim 44. In order to further prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 44 to recite “the first loop containing band extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis,” “the first loop containing band extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis,” and “the third loop containing band extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis.” Berry, as shown above in the *annotated* version of FIG. 5 presented by the Office in the Office Action, does not depict bands extending 360 degrees about a longitudinal axis. To that end, Berry does not anticipate claim 44. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Conclusion

In light of the above, Applicants assert that the current application, with pending claims 38, 41, and 44, is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early action to that effect are solicited earnestly.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the above amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: August 12, 2008

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